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FRANCE - EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES - US: A ranking adviser to President Pompidou has asserted that the US can expect only limited EC concessions in the trade negotiations that resume in Brussels next week.

Pompidou's economic and financial counsellor, Jean-Rene Bernard, told a US Embassy officer earlier this week that the trade talks could produce agreements on grain stockpiling, US citrus exports, and "some arrangement" to increase US tobacco sales. Paris, however, would oppose additional EC concessions at this time.

Looking ahead, Bernard expressed concern that the US might take the position that the community had not been forthcoming enough, and thus jeopardize later discussions on the larger trade issues that are more important to US interests. On these issues, he felt France should take a "liberal" position.

Echoing a theme Pompidou has recently been emphasizing publicly, the Elysee adviser said that France's position on trade issues was increasingly motivated by support of community solidarity, which Paris sees as the best way of keeping Germany tied to the West. For Paris, the cornerstone of community integrity is the common agricultural policy (CAP) and Pompidou this week again publicly questioned whether the US is trying in the US-EC talks to "destroy the common agricultural market." Paris appears worried that US attacks on the CAP presage broader attacks against the community. Bernard said that France would defend the community against such attacks, even if this meant straining Franco-American relations.

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